

Day 7: Fanning Your Flame

The Passage: 2 Timothy 1:6–14

The Focus: *“For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline. So do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord or of me his prisoner. Rather, join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God.” (2 Timothy 1:6–8)*

The Meditation: *“Fan into flame the gift of God. . . .For the Spirit . . . gives us power.”*

Empowering Truths: “Bellows” is a word we seldom use today. But it was once an essential term because “bellows” were the only means to “fan a flame” hot enough to smelt iron ore and get usable iron out of it.

In 2 Timothy Paul uses this word picture to instruct Timothy on how to pursue God’s ministry for his life. Paul says, “Timothy, the gift of God is in you . . . the embers are glowing. But you are responsible for fanning the embers into a flame that unleashes the power of God’s gift through you.”

While commentators aren’t exactly certain of what gift is being spoken of (evangelism, preaching, teaching, pastoring, prophecy, or unknown), what we do know is it needed to be nurtured. We know it was only useful if burning brightly, if flaming up!

We must give passionate attention to whatever gift or calling God has given us. Enthusiasm comes from two root words: “en” meaning “in” and “theos” meaning “God.” When we are truly “in God,” there is an enthusiastic passion for the mission of God.

Timothy seems to have been facing opposition or doubt or difficulty or exhaustion or complacency, which was inducing a timidity in him. These challenges can quench our flame. But Paul states clearly, “Timidity is not the spirit God gives us. Power, love, and discipline come from the Spirit and overcome fear.”

Walking in the fear of the Lord means a daily renewal of our zeal for what his priorities are. As we daily determine to be passionate for God, for his gifts, and for his mission, then we position ourselves to receive his ongoing empowerment. God gives the flame and feeds the flame, but we must fan the flame!

My freshman year in college, I titled my first journal *Pyroo*, a Greek word meaning “to be set on fire,” because this was my prayer to God. It is the Greek word used to describe the feet of Jesus in Revelation 1:15. His feet were on fire! This is still my plea for myself and every Christ follower. We are good news messengers with fire in our feet!

As a teen I learned a short, life-changing chorus: “To be used of God, to speak, to sing, to pray. To be used of God to show someone the way. I long so much to feel the touch of his consuming fire. To be used of God is my desire.” I’m still singing it.

Power Truth: Fan the flame of your gifts because God’s power flows to passionate people.

Our Prayer: Spirit of God, you are the flame that will burn as bright as I allow you. Forgive me for trying to be the flame. Forgive me for neglecting to fan your flame in my life. You are worthy of every drop of my passion. Deliver me from every challenge that seeks to quench my flame. Give me power, love, and discipline. “Give me oil in my lamp. . . . Keep me burning, burning, burning . . . till the break of day.”